For the die hard enthusiast of Japanese hobby culture

RAIJIN GAME & ANIME

雷神

TM

STRAIGHT FROM NIPPON!

PREMIER ISSUE 1

Special Feature

NEW BISHOJO ANIME

The OTAKU storm has finally hit North American shores!

Special Anniversary Interview

OSHII MAMORU 押井守

$0.99 DECEMBER 18, 2002

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Exclusive info from SEGA: Focus on games, anime, & more!

RAIJIN GAME & ANIME TM

Editor's Message

We are very pleased to introduce RAIJIN Game & Anime, full of weekly updates on the very latest entertainment news from Japan, to the American audience. Just about everybody who has turned the cover to read this page is witnessing a big step forward in the history of publishing.

RAIJIN Game & Anime is the sister publication to RAIJIN COMICS, the very first weekly manga magazine in English. The two publications will be sent as a set to our subscribers, and will be sold separately at specialty stores. For those of you who picked up RAIJIN Game & Anime at bookstores, we recommend you to also take a look at RAIJIN COMICS filled with hit titles from the most famous authors in Japan.

Both RAIJIN COMICS and RAIJIN Game & Anime are intended to introduce manga, video games and anime - the three main sources of modern Japanese creativity - in their authentic forms to the American audience. We are confident that contents in both publications will exceed your satisfaction, as they bring to you all the latest information from Japan.

We originally planned to call this publication FUJIN Magazine (RAIJIN = Thunder God, FUJIN = Wind God), but in order to make things less confusing to our readers, we've renamed it to RAIJIN Game & Anime.

What is so special about RAIJIN Game & Anime? Unlike other anime and gaming magazines in the U.S., RAIJIN Game & Anime is written and edited in Japan. It is created by a top team of otaku reporters and editors. It is full of otaku information written by otaku writers for the otaku fans out there.

Now, turn the page to find out about authentic Japanese entertainment. We welcome you to the RAIJIN community!

RAIJIN Game & Anime Editorial Team

RAIJIN GAME & ANIME

TM

STAFF

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF	WATABE KOICHI
EDITORIAL DIRECTORS	WATANABE MASATOSHI NISHIYA HIDEAKI
EDITORS/WRITERS	SHIMIZU KOJI / ISOGAI AYAKO KANAMOTO TARO
TRANSLATORS	SHOU MICHAEL SCHAUERTE MARY KENNARD
ART DIRECTOR	HARIGAYA SHUNJI
DESIGNERS	MORIYA HIROMI / HATTORI YUKA

COVER STORY

Kiddy Grade paints the exploits of two young women belonging to the Galactic Organization of Trade and Tariffs. This month's cover belongs to this anime's starring duo, Eclair and Lumiere. Check out our special feature on this new title for even more info!

Illustrated by GOTO KEIJI ©gímik GONZO/GOTT
©gímik/GONZO KADOKAWA SHOTEN PUBLISHING CO.,LTD.

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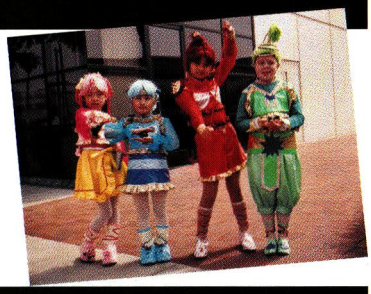
COMIC-CON 2002



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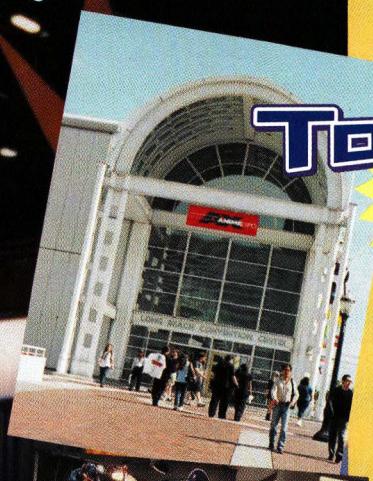
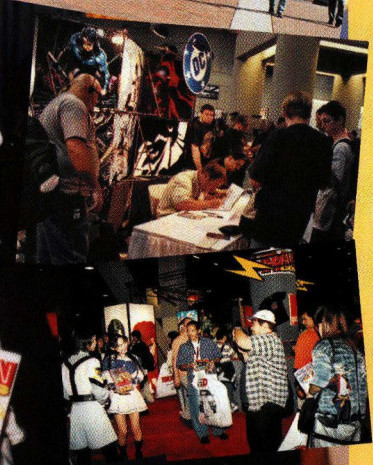




Topic 1 ANIME

This year, beautiful, sunny Long Beach played host to the Anime Expo once again. While the various organizations and guests on hand from Japan were as always greeted enthusiastically by anime fans, this year those fans were treated to something extra-special - announcements by multiple companies that they would be publishing and distributing special magazines for an American audience.

Of course, no discourse of this type would be complete without mentioning RAIJIN, which is to be the very first weekly comics magazine available in the U.S. Present at the expo were three individuals from RAIJIN's publisher COAMIX, who blazed through panel discussions and signing sessions. Among these three was none other than COAMIX President Horie Nobuhiko, who elaborated on his vision during a special Q&A.

"Presently, Japanese manga represents a popular form of culture that has been warmly received across Asia and even

Topic 2 COMIC-

Once again in beautiful San Diego, that annual four-day fair dedicated to comics and popular art known as COMIC-CON was held. The first day of this year's COMIC-CON, a U.S.-based event of magnificent scale, featured a session dedicated to the uncovering of new talent, with the second day graced by a panel discussion based on the mega-popular manga "GTO" called "Tokyopop: Manga Contest and GTO!" Naturally, the RAIJIN and RAIJIN G&A teams were also there in full force. Throughout the event period, both the RAIJIN and RAIJIN G&A booths were overrun with both media groups and individuals looking to get their hands on copies of printed copies of RAIJIN.

RAIJIN STORM THE US!

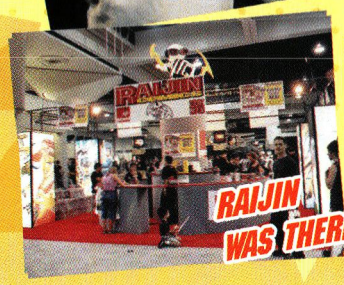
EXPO 2002

Long Beach Convention Center, CA 7/4 - 7

Europe. I'm sure there's no reason why manga can't find a niche in the U.S. as well. What I am aiming to do is make the everyday reading of manga a custom that applies to all over the world."

Despite it being the first formal participation of RAIJIN and RAIJIN Game & Anime in an event of this type, that didn't stop us from securing a premium spot at the show and going all out to make a killer impression with the featuring of *cosplay* performers and the distribution of the premier first issues of both RAIJIN and RAIJIN Game & Anime. On top of that, we accepted numerous orders for regular subscriptions to both from a wave of excited anime and manga fans. With their initial availability in November, a new page in the history of Japanese hobby culture in America will be written. Blessed with a successful and energetic booth following, we reaffirmed our mission of introducing Japan's top manga titles to an American audience.

The three RAIJIN Musketeers: COAMIX President Horie (upper-left), accomplished voice actor Kamiya Akira (top center), and renowned manga creator Hojo Tsukasa (upper-right).



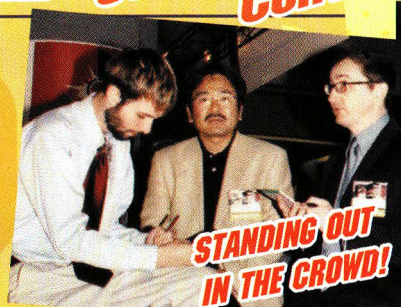
RAIJIN WAS THERE!

-CON 2002

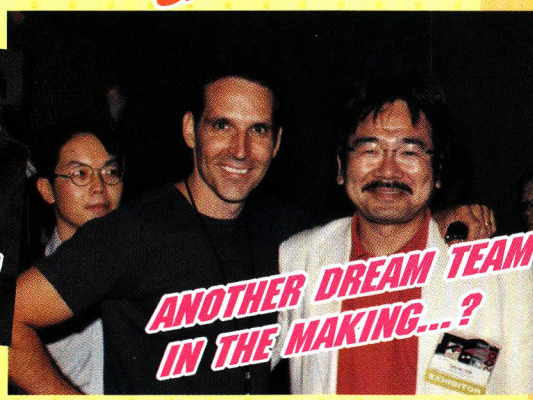
San Diego Convention Center 8/1-4

Needless to say, there was definitely excitement in the air!

Armed with the mission of establishing the presence of RAIJIN and RAIJIN G&A in the U.S., President Horie was busy as well making rounds with both American artists and American media throughout the period of the event. The top dog of COAMIX carried with him the broader hope of giving something back to the U.S. for all of the positive American cultural influence that Japan has benefited from over the years. Horie took advantage of his interviewing with over twenty different media groups to reiterate in greater detail his ardent desire to provide Japanese-produced entertainment to the U.S.



STANDING OUT IN THE CROWD!



ANOTHER DREAM TEAM IN THE MAKING...?

Two comic books gods in their respective cultures pose side-by-side. Imagine the incredible possibilities a Todd McFarlane and Horie team could bring about. Hopefully such a collaboration is in order soon...?

RAIJIN GAME & ANIME PREMIERE ISSUE

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY INTERVEW

OSHII MAMORU

PROFILE

OSHII MAMORU ▶▶ 押井 守

Although Oshii Mamoru made his name as a director and producer of anime, since "Akai Megane--The Red Spectacles" he has also directed many movies. Having attracted a large cult following, in addition to directing anime and movies, he also writes novels and stories for comics. The popularity of "Kokaku Kidotai--GHOST IN THE SHELL" in America brought him world-wide fame.
Major Works:

▶Animation

1980-81	The Wonderful Adventure of Nils
1981-84	Urusei Yatsura TV Series
1983	Urusei Yatsura Only You
1983-84	Dallos (ova)
1984	Urusei Yatsura 2 Beautiful Dreamer
1985	The Angels Egg
1987	Twilight Q2 Meikyubukken FILE538
1989-90	Gosenzo Sama Ban Ban Zai!
1989	Patlabor 1 The Movie
1989-90	Patlabor, The Mobile Police The TV Series
1993	Patlabor 2 The Movie
1995	Ghost in The Shell
2000	Jin-Roh
2002	Mini-Pato

▶Live Action Films

1987	The Red Spectacles
1991	Straydog Kerberos Panzer Cops
1992	Talking Head
2000	Avalon
2002	Killers .50 Woman

A CONDITION FOR THE AMERICAN VERSION OF "GHOST IN THE SHELL" WAS THAT THE FILM ITSELF WOULD NOT BE ALTERED.

In celebration of RAIJIN Game&Anime's launch, we asked popular anime director Oshii Mamoru for an interview. In particular, we asked him about the differences between Japanese and American animation, a subject of sure interest to our readers.

Q. Let's start with "GHOST IN THE SHELL", which was so popular in America.

I went to the States while the English version was being made. A lot was going on, and in the midst of it all it became too troublesome, so I just left it all in the hands of the U.S. staff and came home. I'm glad I went though, because it helped me to understand what the U.S. side was thinking. To them, the most important point was "If it confuses people they won't like it," so they were always saying, "We want to make this part easier to understand."

Q. So, were the two versions different?

The film itself wasn't touched. That was the promise, and they kept it. They made the dialogue a little easier to understand and added extra narration.

But the U.S. version was so loud! Especially the sound effects. Loud doesn't even explain it—it was like the woofer was crashing through your body. And when it rained, for some reason, they always put in thunder (laughs).

Q. The ending to "Beautiful Dreamer" was drastically cut.

I guess over there they figured it was meaningless to keep it. Anime exported to Europe and the U.S. used to be treated like that all the time, because they bought the rights for a certain length of time. They'd do things like buy three series and cut them together to make one. That attitude has changed to one more interested in staying faithful to the works, and I wonder if that's why there's been an increase in the number of fans in America. Recently, more of them are interested in getting the Japanese versions—subtitled, rather than dubbed. I hear that this devotion to the original works is also more prevalent in Europe, as well.

Q. The Japanese language gets a lot across in few words, doesn't it?

It certainly does. For instance, there's often no need for a subject. And it's a very emotional language... or rather, it tries to get the meaning across through nuances. Without a subject, it's kind of hard to translate the meaning into other languages. But that's the kind of language we were brought up surrounded by—and that's why we are the way we are. It's a very ambiguous way of communication (laughs).

Q. So the only changes to the film were to make the dialog easier to follow?

The U.S. side seemed to feel it was their duty not to bore the audience, so when they were done, it seemed like a completely different product. The first time I heard the U.S. voice actors was when I really thought,

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"This is a different movie." The U.S. director recorded the voices, and it was all done in a U.S. studio. Of course, except for the closing theme, the BGM was the same. They added sound effects to the ones we mixed here in Japan, which is why it was so loud. One of the U.S. sound men even said, "It was better before." (laughs)

Considering everything, including the acting ability of the voice actors and the sound effects, I think the original was a more finished product. But the actual film was untouched—that was the promise.

Q. The video hit No.1 on the Billboard charts, didn't it?

Well, that was kind of funny. The news about hitting Billboard No. 1 came quickly, but we all kind of didn't care. "What the heck is a billboard?", we asked. I guess we were kind of trying to be laid back about the situation. (laughs)

Q. Has the success of "GHOST" changed the way you work at all?

It has certainly changed the environment in which I work, since the producers place a high value on such things. It's much easier to get money for projects now. As for myself, I haven't changed at all. Just like always, I make the things I want to make.

OFFICIAL SITE

URL http://www.oshiimamoru.com/

Gabriel no Yuutu [Gabriel's Melancholy official site of Oshii Mamoru.

animation director: TOSHIHIKO NISHIKUBO
art director: HIROMASA OGURA
character design: HIROYUKI OKIURA
music: KENJI KAWAI
directed by: MAMORU OSHII
Produced by KODANSHA in association with BANDAI VISUAL and MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
GHOST IN THE SHELL
People love machines in 2029 A.D.
"Who are you? Who slips into my robot body and whispers to my ghost?"
DVD VIDEO

Oshii Mamoru's signature work, "GHOST IN THE SHELL/Kokaku Kidotai" (DVD Jacket Japanese version). This movie influenced the Wachowski Brothers so much that it was part of their presentation when shopping "The Matrix" around.

I PUT MY CREATIONS OUT THERE, AND VIEWERS ARE FREE TO SEE WHAT THEY WANT IN THEM.

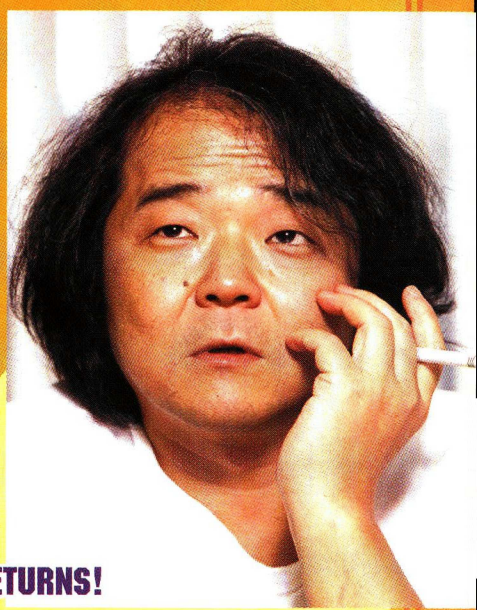
Q. Do you think there are any differences between Japanese fans and American fans?

Not much—an *otaku* is an *otaku*. Really, there's no difference. The American fans want to understand the original work, so they study Japanese. If there is one difference, it's that U.S. anime fans stay anime fans, even after marrying and having kids. They just take their kids with them to the conventions. In Japan, you just don't see many fifty-ish biker types with tattoes carrying their kids on their shoulders at conventions. I thought that was great.

Q. So, Japanese and U.S. fans being so similar could be one reason your works were so well received there.

I know I'll be misunderstood if I say this, but movies cannot transcend borders. On the Internet, I've been called a bigot because of that. (laughs) I really believe that some parts of culture and language just don't translate. It's impossible. Words themselves can have different meanings to a person depending on his emotional state or viewpoint, so anything that uses words, be it movies or songs or novels or comics, some things just won't translate even though you're watching the same thing.

The people watching are all different, aren't they? Are they feeling good? Are they tired? Watching on a small monitor or a big screen? I think people should just take what they want from my works.



RAIJIN G&A Information ISSUE 3

SPECIAL FEATURE: CREATORS NATURALLY, OSHII MAMORU RETURNS!

Way too hot to fit in just two pages, Oshii Mamoru's fiery reminisceces will be back in RAIJIN Game & Anime Vol. 3, where we'll run the rest of the interview! We'll talk with him about his movie "Avalon Grey Lady," which opened across the U.S., and about his work, both past and present. And just maybe we'll also have some top-secret news about a sequel also to a certain movie!

(INTERVIEW by KANAMOTO TARO)

SPECIAL FEATURE NEW BISHOJO ANIME

RAIJIN GAME & ANIME IS PROUD TO INTRODUCE SEVEN NEW TITLES, ALL OF WHICH HAVE SEEN JAPANESE RELEASE, IN THE BISHOJO ANIME GENRE, ONE OF THE PILLARS OF THE MEDIUM.

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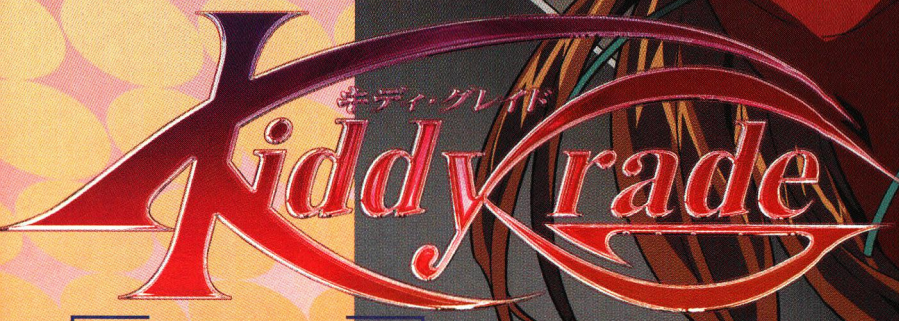
- KIDDY GRADE
- NURSE WITCH KOMUGI-CHAN MAJI-KARTE
- PETITE PRINCESS YUCIE
- RIZELMINE
- MAHOROMATIC MORE BEAUTIFUL THING
- GALAXY ANGEL 3RD SERIES
- SISTER PRINCESS RE PURE



Kiddy Grade

Space Opera

Future

Action

KEEPING ORDER IN THE GALAXY HAS NEVER BEEN SO "KAWAII"!

In the same vein as the classic "Dirty Pair" comes **Kiddy Grade**, a space opera following the exploits of a dynamic female duo that has a penchant for making things right when they go wrong.

Young femmes Eclair and Lumiere belong to GOTT (Galactic Organization of Trade and Tariffs), which is responsible for the coordination of trade disputes that arise between nations. The two perform their daily work duties as receptionists with the most – on the surface, that is. (But we didn't need to tell you that, did we?)

Little do people know that Eclair and Lumiere are in fact ES (Encounter of Shadow-Work) Members, working behind the scenes under the orders of the GOTT High Command to contain trouble between states and planets when it occurs. And now, our heroines.

First is the outrageously stylish Eclair, possessor of superhuman strength, speed, and ability. Proficient in melee as well as shooting-based combat, watching her eliminate whatever gets in her way conjures images of things beautiful yet animalistic. As her specialty lies in infiltration and investigation, Eclair invariably wears a myriad of disguises on the job. And even when she's off duty, one can catch her in any number of interesting get-ups due to her fondness for *cosplay* (Japanese approximation of "cosplay", or "costume play".)

Next up is Lumiere, who at first glance doesn't look any older than ten. In fact, she is ten. However, her mental capacity that surpasses than of a computer serves as a startling contrast to her youthful appearance. Lumiere uses a variety of methods at her disposal in order to carry out her task of Information gathering, including machine -manipulating micro-optic beams that emit from her hands.

Eclair

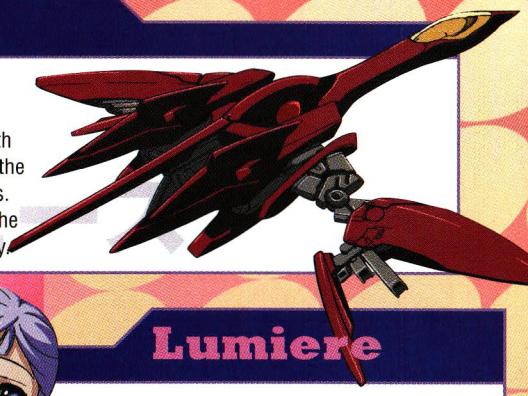
A COMBAT PROFESSIONAL WITH SUPERHUMAN CHARACTERISTICS.

Despite being impulsive and straightforward, Eclair manages to maintain her cheerful character. A whip and explosives concealed within her lipstick serve as her primary weapons.

Làmuse

SPACE FIGHTER

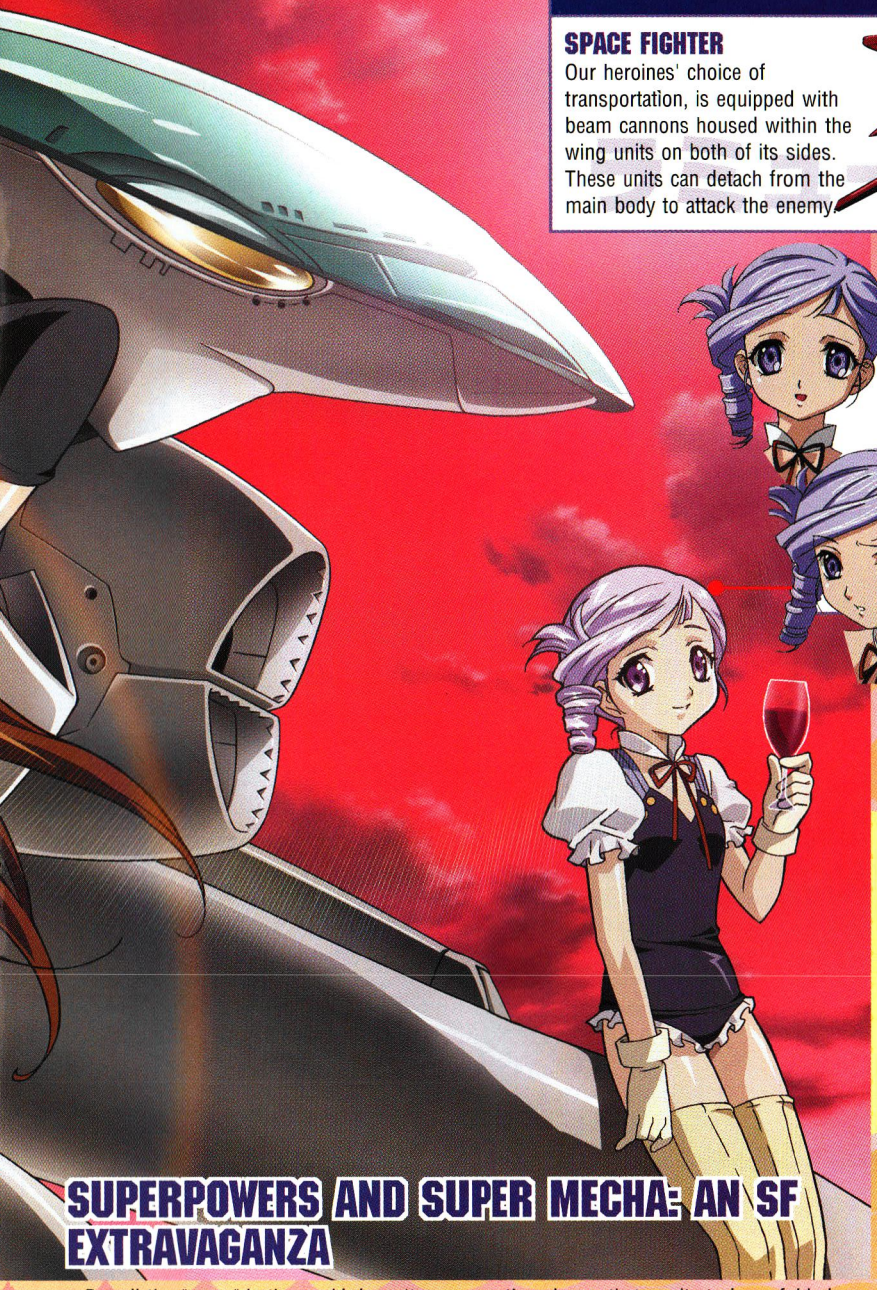
Our heroines' choice of transportation, is equipped with beam cannons housed within the wing units on both of its sides. These units can detach from the main body to attack the enemy.



Lumiere

DON'T BE FOOLED. THE YOUNGEST MEMBER OF GOTT IS ALSO AN EXPERT IN ELECTRONIC WARFARE.

Even at the tender young age of ten, this girl is not only cool and collected but an ES Member to boot. Rarely found without her patented white gloves and bottles.



SUPERPOWERS AND SUPER MECHA: AN SF EXTRAVAGANZA

But all the "super" in the world doesn't amount to anything without appealing characters, and it is here that the real draw of **Kiddy Grade** can be found. On one side of the spectrum you have Eclair, with the body of a woman but the heart of a schoolgirl. Poised on the other side is the young Lumiere, who possesses an adult-like mystique despite her childlike appearance. Complete opposites inside and out, you can bet this duo's hi-jinks extend beyond those of just their mission.

Aside from Eclair and Lumiere, a host of other ES agents will make an appearance throughout **Kiddy Grade**, each of them with their own special powers ranging from the ability to control magnetic waves to that of reading people's thoughts. But, do these agents represent friend, or foe...? Yet another drama that awaits to be unfolded throughout the series.

Complementing the characters within the **Kiddy Grade** world are the machines that also appear throughout. Starting with our heroines' spaceship, the LàMuse, expect a stunning variety of original and exciting mecha to be presented. Eclair and Lumiere's robot sidekick, which fights along side them in battle, is just one example of these.

Making his directorial debut with this particular anime is Goto Keiji, famous for his character designs in "Martian Successor Nadeshiko" and "Gate Keepers". Having proved himself as a designer by bringing forth a wealth of fascinating and appealing characters, it's an exciting prospect as to what kind of interesting situations he will place Eclair and Lumiere in.

Beautiful young girls. Superpowers. Robots. Spaceships. Packing in everything you could want from an SF feature and adding in just the right touch of comedy and sexual innuendo, **Kiddy Grade** has all the markings of a sure-fire winner. If you're on the lookout for a even more *bishojo* version of "Dirty Pair", you'd do well to check this out. The scenes involving the Làmuse in combat and those of the agents as they flex their special abilities are especially bad-ass. In particular, watch out when Eclair puts on that lipstick...

DATA

Broadcast by Fuji Television Network
Wednesday 1:58 AM (approx. 30 min.)
URL ● http://www.kiddygrade.com/

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ナースウィッチ小麦ちゃんマジカルて

NURSE WITCH KOMUGI-CHAN MAJI-KARTE

Magic | **Modern** | **Comedy**

THIS *BISHOJO* COMEDIC SPIN-OFF OF "THE SOUL TAKER" TAKES NO PRISONERS!

Poor Komugi is just too busy! Between high school, acting, and trying to make it big in the idol industry, she has the additional secret task of ridding the world of "Viruses" from another world that bring trouble to humanity! Ah, such is the life of a "magical nurse", I suppose.

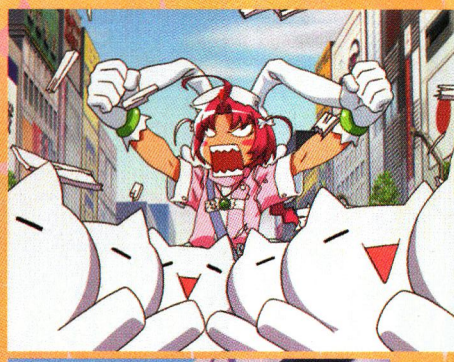
Taking the supporting character of Komugi from "The Soul Taker" and giving her her own feature, this entry represents that category of anime known as *mahoshojo* (translated literally as "magical girl"). Well, at least that's what we thought until actually watching it. What we discovered was that the series in fact is a giant, no-holds-barred parody of other anime and *otaku* culture in general. Perhaps a more grounded version of "Project A-ko" would be an appropriate way to describe it. Then again, perhaps not. "Project A-ko" never had people turning into viruses and gallivanting about Akihabara.

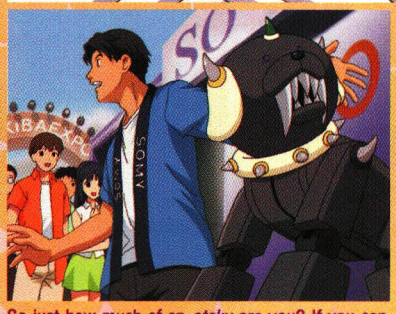
The star of the show, Komugi, is a *cosplay* idol, a high school student, a *mahoshojo*, and a nurse all rolled into one. (See the **Kiddy Grade** feature on the previous page for an explanation of *cosplay*.) Expectedly, you'll catch her throughout the series wearing just about anything, from her "magical nurse" get-up and her school uniform, to campaign promotion outfits and even giant rubber suits.

Also expect to catch a variety of characters from "The Soul Taker" shown in an amusing light that you could have never imagined after seeing that more serious work.

Just as manic as the characters is the story itself. Very little is revealed in the beginning as to how Komugi became a witch or what the bad guys (girls?) are out to do. The rest is left up the nonstop comedic element of the series, which largely pokes at the world of anime and the Internet. Put simply, the more *otaku* you are, the more you'll laugh with this hysterical feature.

While it might be easy to pin the world of Komugi on first glance as an imaginative, Märchen-like one for kids, don't be fooled! It doesn't get more cynical, amusing, and *otaku* than this!





So just how much of an *otaku* are you? If you can pick up on all the elements parodied throughout **Komugi**, you'll have your answer!

Komugi

What's that nurse from "The Soul Taker" doing here as a *cosplay* idol? With her childlike face and small frame, she doesn't look like any kind of high school student - but then again, do they ever?

Koyori

Komugi's classmate under the control of a mysterious power. Can we say, the "maid" to Komugi's "nurse"? With a big attitude and an even bigger chest, Koyori is definitely the perfect counter to Komugi's character.

Mugimaru

What would a *mahoshojo* be without a trusty sidekick? This little one's got quite a sharp tongue, though.

DATA

Publisher●TOSHIBA DIGITAL FRONTIER INC. / Pioneer LDC, Inc.
Volume.1●Now on sale
Volume.2●On sale 22 November
Price●¥5,800
URL●http://www.mugimugi.com/

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ぷちぷり ユーシィ

PETITE PRINCESS YUCIE

Magic | **Modern** | **Comedy**

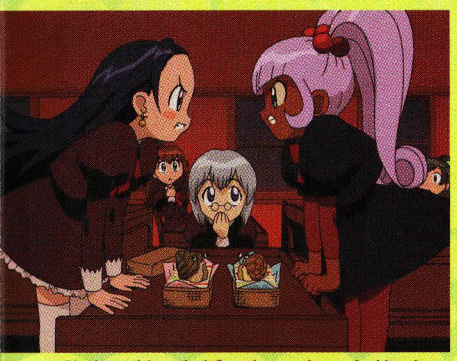
WHO WILL END UP AS THE PLATINUM PRINCESS IN THIS COMING-OF-AGE STORY?

It's every girl's dream to be chosen as the "Platinum Princess", an honor bestowed on a single individual every 1,000 years by the Five Kingdoms: the Human World, the Magic World, the Heavenly World, the Fairy World, and the Spirit World. Our young heroine Yucie, in order to become the best princess she can be, decides to attend an academy to help her make this dream come true.

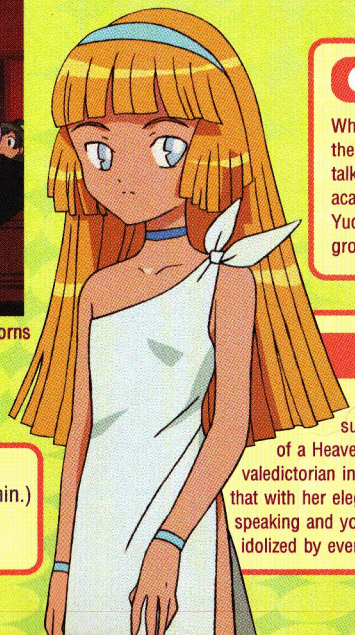
PETITE PRINCESS YUCIE paints the academic life of 17-year-old Yucie and her young friends. The charm of this fantasy anime lies in its depiction of the title character and her companions as they overcome differences in origin and background to grow together as individuals. Another key plot point revolves around the physical growth of Yucie, whose body hasn't matured past the age of ten. What could be the secret behind this...? **PETITE PRINCESS YUCIE** represents a family-oriented anime that can be enjoyed by individuals of all ages. Children can enjoy a fantastical world as seen through the eyes of Yucie, where adults can relate to her coming-of-age process. The setting of this series in the form of a school in a fantasy environment also makes it akin to the likes of "Harry Potter".

The original planner of this anime is none other than Akai Takami, creator of the game "Princess Maker". As the originator of that genre of games known as "growth simulation" titles, it will be a treat to see how Akai goes on to present the growth of Yucie as an person. Also featuring numerous visual and other elements that serve as a throwback to old-school videogames, **PETITE PRINCESS YUCIE** is sure to find a niche among long-time game fans as well.

Overseeing the production of **YUCIE** animated exploits is GAINAX, which has established itself over the years with its plethora of anime works geared towards diehard fans of the genre such as "Nadia" and "Evangelion". Those same fans can look forward to an exciting change of pace with the first GAINAX mass-market entry.



Yucie and her rival Grenda are always locking horns over something. Let's just hope their hostility towards each other doesn't affect those around them.



Yucie

A naive girl from the Human World smitten over a prince that once rescued her long ago. Problem is, her body won't grow past the age of ten! With that and the help of her small dragon companion, she sets her sights on "platinum".

Grenda

Known for her dirty mouth as much as for her ability to perform magic, this daughter of a Magic World king is continually at odds with Yucie. But, like Yucie, her physical growth hasn't matured past the age of ten.

Cocolu

While tending to be inconspicuous due to the leisurely manner in which she moves and talks, this petite princess attending the same academy as Yucie goes on to become Yucie's best friend. Influenced by Yucie to grow up a bit herself.

Elumina

It should come to no surprise that this daughter of a Heavenly World king is also the valedictorian in Yucie's class! Couple that with her elegant manner and way of speaking and you have a petite princess idolized by everybody.

DATA

Broadcast by NHK BS-2
Monday, 6:00 PM (approx. 30 min.)
URL●http://www.gainax.co.jp/anime/puchipuri/

©GAINAX/PETITE-PRINCESS Committee

りぜるまいん
rizelmine

rizelmine

Magic | Modern | Comedy

IS SHE REALLY ONLY 12? A NEW ROMANTIC COMEDY SERIES

The love comedy series "Rizelmine"—featuring the (sometimes) 12-year-old girl Rizel and Tomonori, a boy with a thing for older women—is now in its second season. The love adventure between this aggressive girl and hard-to-get guy follows the same basic storyline as "Urusei Yatsura." But "Rizel-mine" has gained popularity by introducing some other elements, including the idea of featuring a 12-year old heroine and some suggestive descriptions.

In the new series, Rizel gain the ability to transform herself and then comes on to Tomonori in her new adult disguise.

Dressing up as a waitress or *nekomimi*, among other things, Rizel displays a mature charm she has not revealed before. Will Tomonori be able to resist her seductive power?

The story is also full of twists and turns. The new series clears up some lingering mysteries from the first season, such as the secret behind Rizel and Tomonori's marriage and other stories from the past. There is even a female rival to Rizel who shows up.

変身!!

As an adult, Rizel dresses up in costumes to tempt Tomonori. Her costumes Tomonori are sure to draw attention.

DATA
Broadcast by TVK Television
Sunday, 0:45 AM (approx. 30 min.)
URL●http://www.pc-moe.com/

まほろまてぃっく
Automatic Maiden
～もっと美しいもの～

Mahoromatic more beautiful thing

SF | Modern | Romantic Comedy

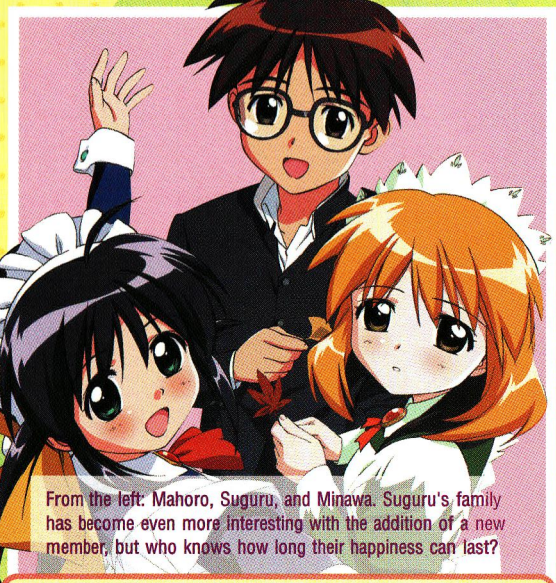
THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN HUMANS AND ANDROIDS A HEARTWARMING SF COMEDY

Adapted from a manga of the same name, this is the second in the SF anime series. The heroine, Mahoro, is an android chambermaid and the hero is named Suguru. All the girls have a big crush on Suguru, which makes it seem like a typical *moe* type of story. But this show also strikes a serious note when it deals with such things as Mahoro's past as a military android and the fact that she has less than one year to live.

Mahoromatic revolves around the romantic adventures of the girls, Mahoro's struggle with her past, and the countdown to her almost-certain demise. This three-layered story has already won the hearts of many fans and sparked a great deal of attention because GAINAX produced this anime adaptation.

This second series also features a new female character named Minawa, who looks up to Mahoro like an older sister. Minawa is a spy, and is torn between her allegiance to her organization and the growing affection she feels towards Mahoro and the others. On top of this explosive internal conflict, Minawa is literally walking around with a bomb implanted within her body!

Unlike most recent anime, this is a series that can move people with its tragic scenes. **Mahoromatic** will have you hooked!



From the left: Mahoro, Suguru, and Minawa. Suguru's family has become even more interesting with the addition of a new member, but who knows how long their happiness can last?

DATA
Broadcast by BS-i
Friday, 0:30 AM (approx. 30 min.)
URL●http://www.mahoro-matic.com/

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GALAXY ANGEL

ギャラクシーエンジェル

GALAXY ANGEL 3rd Series

Space Opera **Future** **Comedy**

CAREFREE IN THE UNIVERSE: A GIRL GANG IN TOP FORM?

The popular anime comedy **GALAXY ANGEL**, about five beautiful girls who go on a rampage in a universe in the distant future, has kicked off its third season. The main characters, Milfeulle, Ranpha, Mint, Forte and Vanilla, are back, and they're wilder than ever!

The charm of **GALAXY ANGEL** is that none of the stories are connected. The entire universe may be on the brink of destruction in one episode, and the next moment it's as if nothing had happened. Since every story starts at the beginning, any outrageous stunt is possible. Plus, with no connection between the stories, a person can start watching **GALAXY ANGEL** from any show they like.

The current season features everything from supernatural powers to sexy scenes and giant robots, and all sorts of things in between. The **GALAXY ANGEL** gang is only getting started, and we'll certainly be hearing more from them soon!

From the upper left: the sharp-tongued Mint, bossy Ranpha, trigger-happy Forte, enigmatic Vanilla, and always lucky Milfeulle standing tall on the right. Their personalities and actions are different, but all five girls are serious troublemakers.

DATA

Broadcast by Television Osaka & TV TOKYO
Sunday, 9:30 AM (approx. 30 min.)
URL ● http://www.broccoli.co.jp/ga/anime/

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Sister Princess Re Pure

シスター・プリンセス リピュア

A ROMANTIC FANTASY COMEDY ABOUT 12 SISTERS

Sister Princess Re Pure

Modern **Romance**

A boy is surprised one day to discover that he suddenly has 12 cute little sisters. This is the unusual premise for the anime **Sister Princess**, which has already won a loyal following and now enters its second season .

Sister Princess is the very essence of a *moe* story. Even though the girls are supposed to be the boy's sisters, they act more like girlfriends, constantly holding his hand and proposing to him. The story depicts a world of familial love that has little to do with the real world. The sisters come up with all sorts of cute nicknames for their "older brother," and each one has their own special name for him. No true *otaku* could pass up this story!

In the new series, each episode is divided into two stories. The first half is the same as the earlier series, and depicts the cerefree life of the sisters. The second half focuses on one sister in particular, and presents a short story in the form of a monologue. This provides the fans of each sister with deep insights into the object of their obsession. Moreover, the ending theme music changes with each story, and a special theme song has been prepared for each of the 12 sisters.

DATA

Broadcast by TV TOKYO
Thursday, 0:55 AM (approx. 30 min.)
URL ● http://www.mediaworks.co.jp/gamers_s/sispri/

©Naoto Tenhiro • Sakurako Kinino • Media Works Co.,Ltd /Pri-Pure Manufacture committee

KING GAINER OVERMAN

DATA
Broadcast by WOWOW / WOWOW2
Saturday, 7:30 PM (approx. 30 min.)
URL●http://www.king-gainer.net/

TOMINO'S NEWEST ROBOT ANIME IS YET ANOTHER TOMINO EXPLOSION!

Director Tomino Yoshiyuki is well-known for taking taking the typical format of robot anime and turning it upside down, from his earlier shows such as "Xabungle" and "Dunbine" to the recent series "Turn A Gundam". His new series, **OVERMAN KING GAINER**, is no exception. In Japan, the design of the robot in "Turn A Gundam" was something of a shock, and became known as The Mustache. The new design, when seen in a still shot, also leads to the surprised reaction, "What is THAT!?" But as soon as it starts to move, the robot's resemblance to a kabuki lion dancer becomes obvious, and the look is totally cool. This is what anime all about.

The energy produced by the robots in this show is visible around their structure (silhouette), and thus they are known as Silhouette Machines. This new concept in mecha design is the brainchild of Yasuda Akira, game mecha designer for Capcom. The sensibilities of mecha designers in the anime world seem somehow fundamentally different from those of mecha designers in the game world.

Let's look at the story. It's set Earth in the near future, at a time when environmental destruction has been completed. The few temperate areas left have been set aside for growing food, and humans live in huge domed cities (DOMEPOLIS) set up in deserts or on the tundra. Those who try to leave the domes and migrate to the temperate areas (EXODUS) are severely punished. Earth has become a kind of deathtopia.

The main character is Gainer, a young man who lives in the Siberian Domepolis and loves games. One day he is mistaken for an Exodist by the Siberian Railroad Police and arrested. In prison, he meets a real Exodist, and together they escape. Their flight begins when they get hold of OVERMAN, a humanoid, mid-sized robot.

The storyline is a fairly typical one for robot anime, and from the first episode, the characters make typical Tomino-like expressions, such as "Is that what an adult would do!?" and "He does it because he's an adult!". Together with the BGM by Kohei Tanaka, Tomino sets a relentless pace that draws the viewer into a new world. Tomino may not be for everyone's tastes, but his superb directing skills should be acknowledged. One of his specialties is presenting heavy themes that often come to the forfront, oncorporated in light, everyday episodes, that makes us look forward all the more to how this series will develop. For example, as our heroes are in the middle of their flight, they take hostage the daughter of a duke—but due to her strong curiosity, she lightheartedly enjoys the Exodus. And in the first episode, female soldiers pursuing the fugitives are wrapped head-to-toe by the Bondage Fasion.

At first glance, **KING GAINER** might almost be mistaken for a comedic anime. As is the case with many recent anime series, however, this one is full of foreshadowing and mystery.

(Written by WATANABE MASATOSHI)

Metal muscles are fixed to a frame, the batteries are internal, and a skin-like exterior presents a humanoid appearance. Each robot has a set of special functions, or "overkills".

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HEAT GUY-J

DATA
Broadcast by TBS
Wednesday, 1:50 AM (approx. 30 min.)
URL●http://www.heat-guy.com/

A "HOT GUY" MAKES HIS DEBUT ON LATE NIGHT TV ANIME

Sequels and anime based on manga have largely made up the recent anime available late at night. The main characters have also mostly been cute young girls. "Chobits", which **HEATGUY** replaces, was just that—a show featuring a bishojo character from a manga series. But **HEATGUY** is different. Swimming against the tide of current trends, this anime's selling point is a cool guy in the hard-boiled vein.

The story takes place in Kabuki Road, located in the South Area of the artificial city Jed. This crime-infested South Area slum, where illegal immigrants gather, is also popularly known as Bay Area. There are seven giant cities on this planet, but Jed is unique among them. Built on floats, Jed is a city 30 kilometers in diameter on the surface of the ocean.

On this world, the seven cities exist in almost total isolation, and each has developed into separate city-state. Outside of the cities, survival is impossible, so the seething masses of humanity exist cheek to cheek within the confines of the city borders.

Technically, the main character is Daisuke Aurora, an employee of the Municipal Central Safety Management Bureau, and the story begins with the focus on his activities—but surely the star of the series is his partner, Android Jay. He's 2.3 meters tall, weighs a third of a ton, looks to be somewhere around 40 years old and is much given to dispensing advice to Daisuke, along the lines of, "A man doesn't speak his opinion, he shows it in his actions." He's one of those middle-aged heroes we rarely see in anime.

When running flat out, Jay can reach speeds of up to 180 km/hr. In this and other abilities, he far surpasses the capacity of humans and even other androids. In a world where all androids are illegal, Jay was secretly created by a group of government engineers and private companies, so even should his existence be revealed, he will be ignored. This secret creation itself is pretty cool.

When Jay exerts all his strength, he vents heat from under his skin in the form of water vapor. Wreaking havoc within a cloud of steam, he's like an avenging god—and that's where he gets his nickname, HEATGUY.

In Tokyo, **HEATGUY-J** is broadcast at almost the same time as another anime series, **Kiddy Grade** (see P8). The hot topic of discussion between Japanese anime fans is which will people watch—the testosterone-laden **HEATGUY** or the gorgeous **Kiddy Grade**? A quick check of comments on the Internet shows that **HEATGUY** is in the lead by a hair—and fans are already starting to list up Jay's cool lines.

The character designs are by Yuki Nobuteru, who was also in charge of character design for "Escaflowne",

But Jay's not the only great character—the series is chock full of them. Among these, 19-year-old Clair Leonelli, the don of a criminal organization, is sure to be a hit with her figure and eccentric behavior—and will surely be the star of many *dojinshi* at the next Comic Market.

(Written by WATANABE MASATOSHI)

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Culdcept® II

カルドセプト セカンド

EXPANSION

DATA
Publisher●SEGA
Platform●PlayStation 2
Genre●Trading Card/Board Game
Release●Sept. 26, 2002
Price●¥6,800

THE NEWEST PLAYSTATION 2 RELEASE OF THIS POPULAR FANTASY SERIES INCORPORATES ELEMENTS OF PLAYING-CARD AND BOARD GAMES.

Fans of the popular fantasy game **Culdsept** will be thrilled to hear that the long-awaited new version has been released.

In the **Culdsept** series, players try to expand their territory on a map-board, and extort fees from the opponents who happen to land in their area. Each stage is cleared when a player accumulates a certain amount of money and makes it back around to the starting point. The game could be simply described as Monopoly in a fantasy setting. There is one big difference to Monopoly, however - battles can be fought to seize territory occupied by an opponent. These battles are similar to the card battles in "Magic: The Gathering", and **Culdsept II** players likewise try to gather a set of cards to form a "book." This is one of the great appeals of the game.

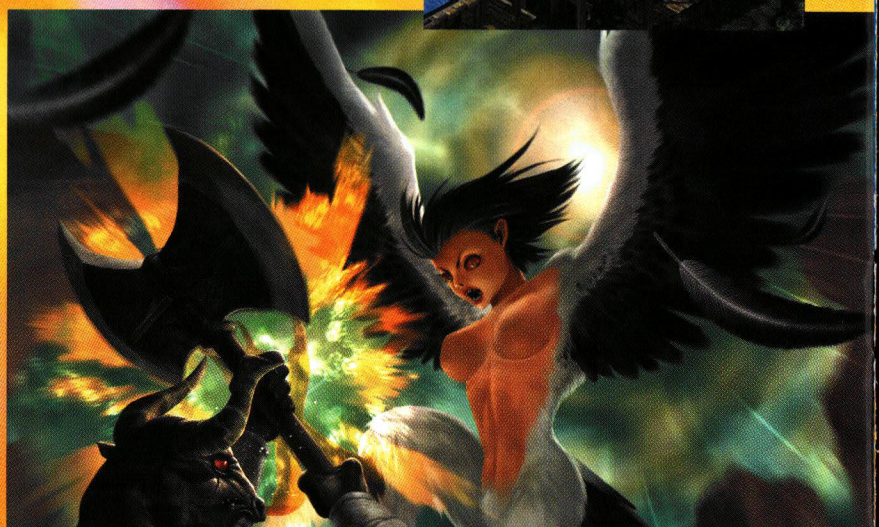
In **Culdcept II Expansion**, 30 new cards have been added to the Dreamcast Version II, making for a total of 480 cards. Depending on the combination of cards, the "book" strategy also changes greatly.

"Books", the card sets featured within this game, are different from the likes of M:TG in that it doesn't require cards typically needed in order to earn usage cost. This allows you to combine creature, item, and spell cards up to the 50-card limit, providing for some extraordinarily diverse combinations. Plus, as battles are conducted by showing each other all cards in hand, catching your opponent off-guard with an effective combination becomes a crucial part of the game. It's also the most exciting part!

The data for each card has also been adjusted to make it easier to play. Luck has always played a big role in the game, with victory often depending on the roll of the dice or drawing the right card, and this is even more true in the new version. Since beginners, with a little luck, can sometimes give seasoned pros a run for their money, this has opened up the game.

Still, there is no question that a novice will find it hard to beat an old hand who has mastered the art of getting a "book." The subtle balance in **Culdcept II** between skill and luck is what draws players deeper and deeper into the game's world.

The system and scenario in this series remain unsurpassed. Some people, however, are disappointed that it is not possible to play opponents online, since challenging high-level players is the best way to improve. Still, users of PlayStation 2 on the Internet can upload and download their own data. Moreover, additional cards and maps will be distributed, to prevent the game from getting stale.



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SEGA OF AMERICA HEDGEHOG EXPRESS

HERE WE HAVE THE LATEST INFORMATION FOR SEGA FANS AROUND THE WORLD! IN EACH ISSUE, THIS PAGE WILL FOCUS ON THE NEWEST GAMES RELEASED BY SEGA OF AMERICA. BE SURE TO CHECK IT OUT!

PICK UP! GUNGRAVE

DATA

Publisher	SEGA		
Platform	PlayStation 2	Genre	Gun Action
Release	In Stores Now	Price	US$49.99

AN ACTION SHOOTER WITH A SIGNATURE STYLE ALL ITS OWN!

Since you're reading this article, you've probably already played the game or heard the hype. In either case, a great team was assembled for this project, including Nightow Yasuhiro, Fujishima Kosuke and Kubo Toru. Nightow, creator of the huge hit comic "Trigun Maximum", provided the original idea and character designs, Kosuke, of "Sakura Taisen" fame, was responsible for the technical design, and Toru, who is known for the "Sakura Wars" series and "Tengai Makyo" was the producer. With this amazing talent, **Gungrave** was destined to be great!

Back from the dead is Grave, a trigger unhappy hero on a mystery-shrouded mission. While he has no hesitation showering enemies with bullets from his trusty oversize guns, Grave also uses the coffin strapped to his back to fight against the syndicate thugs that killed him in the first place. When things get hectic, Grave's coffin quickly converts to a stylish rocket launcher, and can also be used to destroy environment elements in his path.

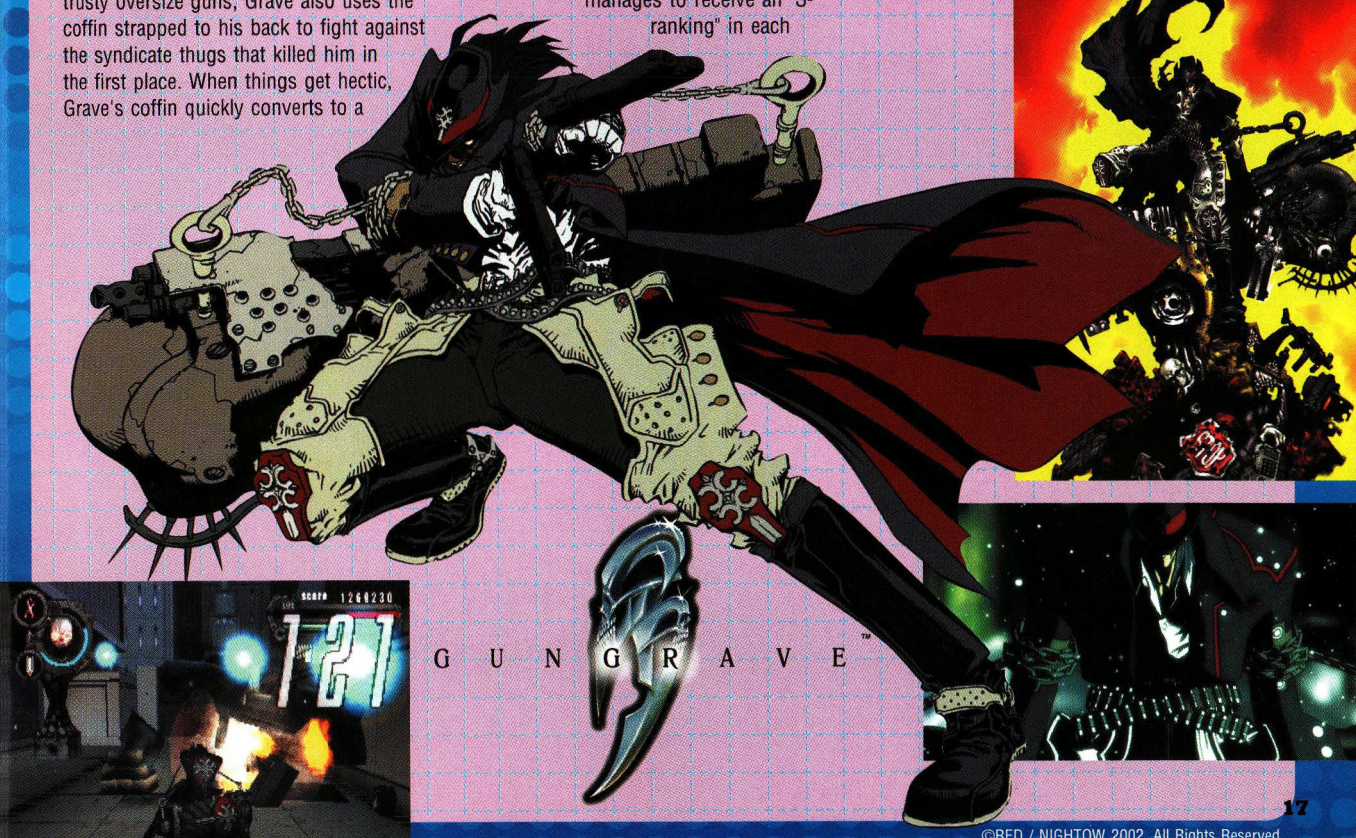
With unlimited ammo and an engaging storyline involving a corrupt cartel, **Gungrave** aims for maximum plot-driven gun-shooting gratification--and succeeds!

There is more than enough excitement here to satisfy fans of the shooter genre that also appreciate having a motivation behind their actions. In this stylish game, technique is everything. The more creative the player's shooting stance – such as jumping sideways with both barrels blazing in mid air – the better the score and the more launcher grenades they receive.

Skull points based on the player's performance are tallied after each stage, and then added up after all the stages have been cleared. The highest title, "Beyond the Grave," is bestowed on a player who manages to receive an "S-ranking" in each category. The player is then rewarded with an exclusive viewing of a movie, which features beautiful female characters designed by Kosuke. (Kosuke's characters, needless to say, could not be any cuter.)

Although this is a relatively straightforward shooter game, getting an all-S ranking is not an easy task. To win the title, it's necessary to get four skull points in the four categories on each stage. Moreover, it isn't enough to randomly blow things up, since other aspects, such as speed, remaining power, and artistic poses factor into the evaluation. As a result, players need to take care to be as accurate as possible while blowing things to bits.

Issue #3 of Raijin Game & Anime will include an interview with Nightow Yasuhiro. Will he reveal the secrets of **Gungrave**? Find out here!



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NEXT ISSUE PREVIEW

ISSUE #2

SPECIAL FEATURE

Bringing as many as 500,000 fans together!

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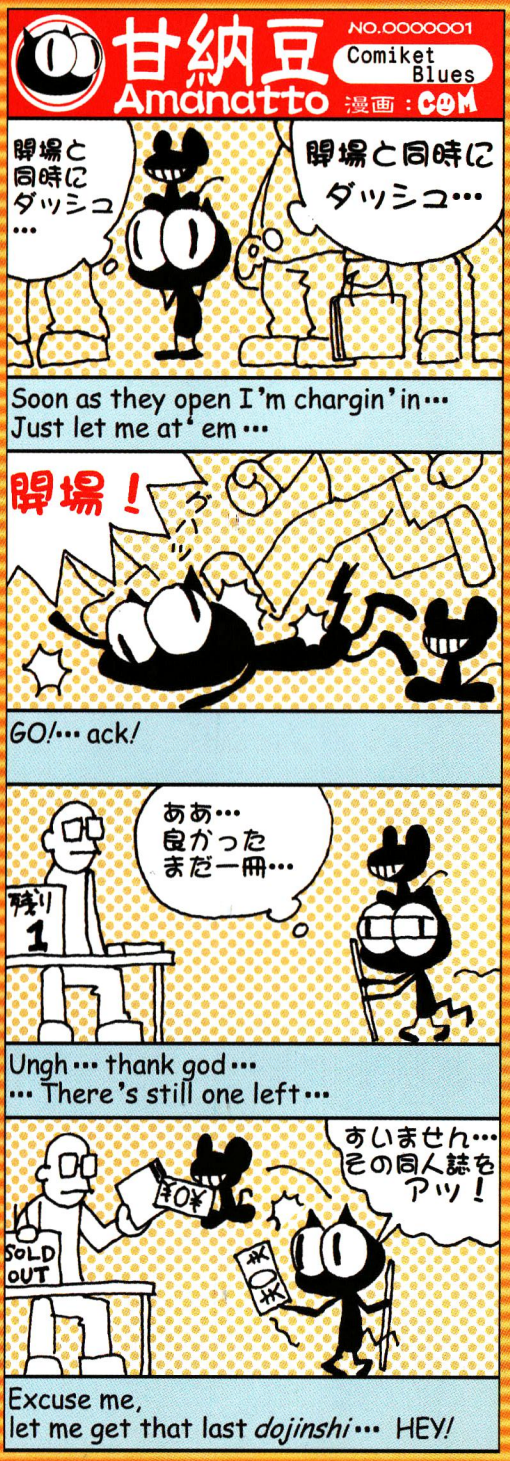
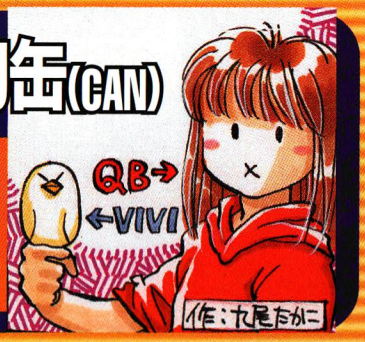
RAIJIN G&A is proud to bring you the latest in info and pictures from the Comic Market, a 3-day anime, manga, and *cosplay* extravaganza!



NEW ARTICLE

OTAKU缶(CAN)

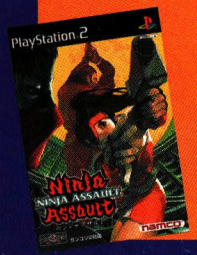
Check out our *otaku* commentary beginning next issue, presented in manga form! [Comic by Kyubi Takako]



REGULER ARTICLES

Anime Focus
Galaxy Angel Mao Dant

Game Focus
Ninja Assault



Today's Topics
Kichijoji Anime Wonderland

SEGA OF AMERICA
HEDGEHOG EXPRESS
"Phantasy Star Online Episode I&II"

...and more!!

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